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~ PS4 New, Needs Update! ~ Coaching Brazilian Pols! ~ Mavericks Is Free!
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- * White House Official Fired Over Tweets *-
- * Facebook To Warn Users of Violent Content! *-

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->From the Editor's Keyboard           "Saying it like it is!"
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If the temps were an indicator, it would be much later in the year! However, we've begun the annual "Fall Classic" tradition - the World Series is upon us. Sorry folks, but living in the Northeast, I'm rooting for the Red Sox! But, I will admit that it's going to be a tough series; the Cardinals team is a good one! I predict the Sox win it in six games!

Until next time...

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PlayStation 4 Won't Play Blu-rays Or DVDs Out of The Box

When the PlayStation 4 launches on November 15th, there will be a software update already waiting for new owners and that update is necessary to enjoy some of the console's most basic functions. Chief among these features is the ability to play Blu-ray discs or DVDs, which won't be possible until the update is installed. You also won't be able to utilize

Remote Play, which lets gamers play PS4 games on a PS Vita, while other missing features include the ability to play games as they're being downloaded, recording and uploading gameplay using the console's new sharing features, and being able to use voice chat while playing games with friends. Of course, these features will be available once you install the 300MB update, but for those looking to simply enjoy their shiny new PS4 straightaway, they'll be in for a bit of a wait instead.

'Bioshock Infinite' Is Heading Back to Rapture

You'll be able to visit Rapture again very soon. 2K Games announced that the first episode of Bioshock Infinite's "Burial at Sea" downloadable add-on, which was revealed in July, will be launching on November 12th for the PlayStation 3, Xbox 360, and PC for \$14.99. In addition to taking players back to the underwater setting of the original Bioshock, "Burial at Sea" also changes the gameplay up somewhat, with a focus on stealth and managing resources. No date has been announced for the second episode of the two-part story. "This is a love letter to the fans, but it's also the beginning of a story that will give gamers a new perspective on the Bioshock universe," says creative director Ken Levine. If you just can't wait for November, Irrational has released a video detailing the first five minutes of the upcoming adventure.

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->A-ONE Gaming Online      -      Online Users Growl & Purr!
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Pinball Pioneer Alvin Gottlieb Dies At 86

Pinball pioneer and inventor Alvin J. Gottlieb died on Oct. 14 in Florida. He was 86.

Alvin was the son of David Gottlieb, who in 1927 founded the eponymous D. Gottlieb & Co. pinball and arcade game factory in Chicago. Alvin was born the same year his father opened the factory where he would spend almost four decades building pinball machines. Pinball discussion and fan sites, like Pinside.com, lit up last week with condolences and praise for Alvin.

D. Gottlieb & Co. first produced mechanical tables and later made electromechanical pin games starting in 1935. Among its many achievements, Gottlieb's Humpty Dumpty (1947) is considered by industry historians to be its most important release because the machine included flippers. While flippers were already used on many games prior to 1947, they were the same manually operated bats used on baseball arcade games. Humpty Dumpty, however, was the first game made with electromechanical flippers, and this innovation gave players the ability to shoot the ball back up the playfield to get more points. Gottlieb's most popular pinball machine was Baffle Ball (1931).

D. Gottlieb & Co. began making solid-state tables in the late 1970s. The first of these were remakes of its electromechanical properties like Joker Poker and Charlie's Angels. In 1977, Gottlieb was bought by Columbia Pictures. After Coca-Cola Co. had acquired Columbia in 1983, the amusement machine assets were transferred to a Coke subsidiary, Mylstar Electronics, but this move was short-lived. By 1984, the arcade videogame industry in North America had crashed, and Coca-Cola sought to divest itself of Mylstar. The Gottlieb pinball assets were bought out by a management group, which would continue to manufacture pin games under the corporate name Premier Technology.

Alvin Gottlieb would later return the family name to the pinball industry, but on a first-name basis. After the collapse of coin-op video in the mid-1980s, pinball experienced a comeback. Alvin G. & Co. was one of several new manufacturers entering the field; Capcom Pinball and Data East Pinball (funded by Japan's Data East) were among the others entering the segment, which was still dominated by Williams Electronics.

The end of the 1990s saw another downturn in the industry, with Alvin G. and Capcom Pinball closing in 1996. Premier Technology, whose games still carried the original Gottlieb name, also shut down; Barb Wire was the last Gottlieb game. That same year, Data East's pinball division was acquired by Sega and became Sega Pinball. By 1997, Sega Pinball and Williams were the only pinball companies left. In 1999, Sega sold its pinball division to Gary Stern, president of Sega Pinball at the time, who renamed the company Stern Pinball. By this time, Williams was only selling about 4,000 units, and it eventually exited the pinball business.

Alvin G. & Co. created and produced about a dozen pinball machine titles between 1991 and 1996; A.G. Soccer-Ball, an uncommon head-to-head flipper game, was its first and Slam 'N Jam was the last. Alvin Gottlieb was inducted into the Pinball Hall of Fame during at 2006 Pinball Expo.

He is survived by his children Laura, Daniel, Michael and Joseph; grandchildren Stephan, Lisa, Aryeh, Zvi, Nathan, Noah, Mitchell and Maxwell; and great-grandchildren Mordechai, Ayla and Eden.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

White House Official Fired Over Anonymous Tweets

A senior White House official who was helping negotiate nuclear issues with Iran has been fired after being unmasked as the acidic voice behind a Twitter account known for its insults of public figures at the White House and on Capitol Hill, a government official said on Tuesday.

Jofi Joseph was director of nuclear non-proliferation on the White House National Security Council staff, but for more than two years sent hundreds of anonymous and abrasive tweets using the handle @NatSecWonk.

He was fired last week after he was caught, the official said.

A White House official confirmed Joseph no longer worked there, but would not comment on personnel matters. The firing was first reported by the website Daily Beast.

In his Twitter biography, now removed from the social networking site, Joseph described himself as a "keen observer of the foreign policy and national security scene" who "unapologetically says what everyone else only thinks."

As the widely followed @NatSecWonk, Joseph speculated anonymously about the political motives and career moves of administration officials he worked with. They included Ben Rhodes, President Barack Obama's spokesman on national security issues.

This month, Joseph tweeted that Hillary Clinton, the former secretary of state, "had few policy goals and no wins" in the Middle East. He agreed with Republican Representative Darrell Issa, who has relentlessly pursued Clinton for administration actions after last year's attack on the U.S. diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya.

"Look, Issa is an ass, but he's on to something here with the @HillaryClinton whitewash of accountability for Benghazi," he tweeted.

He also sniped at U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Samantha Power's use of Twitter. "Can someone again brief @AmbassadorPower that Bashar Assad likely doesn't follow her Twitter feed?" he recently wrote.

Joseph did not respond to phone and email requests for comment, but he told the website Politico he regretted his tweets.

"What started out as an intended parody account of DC culture developed over time into a series of inappropriate and mean-spirited comments. I bear complete responsibility for this affair and I sincerely apologize to everyone I insulted," Joseph said in an email to Politico.

He also targeted journalists, including Daily Beast reporter Josh Rogin who broke the story of his firing. "Just a hunch, but I have the sense lots of people would like to punch @joshrogin in the face," he said earlier this month.

Germany Wants A German Internet As Spying Scandal Rankles

As a diplomatic row rages between the United States and Europe over spying accusations, state-backed Deutsche Telekom wants German communications companies to cooperate to shield local internet traffic from foreign intelligence services.

Yet the nascent effort, which took on new urgency after Germany said on Wednesday that it had evidence that Chancellor Angela Merkel's mobile phone had been monitored, faces an uphill battle if it is to be more than a marketing gimmick.

It would not work when Germans surf on websites hosted on servers abroad, such as social network Facebook or search engine Google, according to

interviews with six telecom and internet experts. Deutsche Telekom could also have trouble getting rival broadband groups on board because they are wary of sharing network information.

More fundamentally, the initiative runs counter to how the Internet works today - global traffic is passed from network to network under free or paid-for agreements with no thought for national borders.

If more countries wall themselves off, it could lead to a troubling "Balkanisation" of the Internet, crippling the openness and efficiency that have made the web a source of economic growth, said Dan Kaminsky, a U.S. security researcher.

Controls over internet traffic are more commonly seen in countries such as China and Iran where governments seek to limit the content their people can access by erecting firewalls and blocking Facebook and Twitter.

"It is internationally without precedent that the internet traffic of a developed country bypasses the servers of another country," said Torsten Gerpott, a professor of business and telecoms at the University of Duisburg-Essen.

"The push of Deutsche Telekom is laudable, but it's also a public relations move."

Deutsche Telekom, which is 32 percent owned by the government, has received backing for its project from the telecoms regulator for potentially giving customers more options.

In August, the company also launched a service dubbed "E-mail made in Germany" that encrypts email and sends traffic exclusively through its domestic servers.

Government snooping is a sensitive subject in Germany, which has among the strictest privacy laws in the world, since it dredges up memories of eavesdropping by the Stasi secret police in the former East Germany, where Merkel grew up.

The issue dominated discussions at a European summit on Thursday, prompting Merkel to demand that the U.S. strike a "no-spying" agreement with Berlin and Paris by the end of the year.

As the row festers, telecom and Internet experts said the rhetoric exceeded the practical changes that could be expected from Deutsche Telekom's project. More than 90 percent of Germany's internet traffic already stays within its borders, said Klaus Landefeld, a board member of the non-profit organization that runs the DE-CIX Internet exchange point in Frankfurt.

Others pointed out that Deutsche Telekom's preference for being paid by other Internet networks for carrying traffic to the end user, instead of "peering" agreements at no cost, clashed with the goal to keep traffic within Germany. It can be cheaper or free for German traffic to go through London or Amsterdam, where it can be intercepted by foreign spies.

Thomas Kremer, the executive in charge of data privacy and legal affairs for the German operator, said the group needed to sign connection agreements with three additional operators to make a national routing possible. "If this were not the case, one could think of a legislative

solution," he said.

"As long as sender and receiver are in the Schengen area or in Germany, traffic should no longer be routed through other countries," Kremer said, referring to the 26-country passport-free zone in Europe.

A spokesman for Telefonica Germany said it was in early discussions on national routing with other groups. A spokesman for Vodafone said it was "evaluating if and how" to implement the Deutsche Telekom proposal.

Although Deutsche Telekom is positioning itself as a safe custodian of user data, its track record on privacy is mixed. In a 2008 affair dubbed Telekomgate, Klaus Trzeschan, a security manager at the group, was jailed for three and a half years for his role in monitoring phone calls of the firm's own management and supervisory board members, as well as business reporters.

A spokesman for Deutsche Telekom said the affair was the reason why the group worked "so hard" on privacy and security issues in recent years. "We are now the leading company of our industry when it comes to customers' trust," he said.

While the routers and switches that direct traffic can be programmed so data travel certain routes, the most popular online services are not built to respect borders.

Web companies often rely on a few large data centers to power their entire operation, and they don't choose locations based on the location of their customers but on factors such as the availability of cheap power, cool climates, and high-speed broadband networks.

For example, if a Munich resident uses Facebook to chat with a friend sitting 500 kilometers (310 miles) away in Berlin, the traffic would go through one of the company's three massive data centers 8,000 km away in Oregon or North Carolina, or one near the Arctic Circle in the Swedish town of Luleå. European users' profiles are not necessarily stored in the Swedish centre; instead the website's different functions such as games, messaging, and wall posts are distributed among the data centers to improve efficiency.

Similarly, emails sent by Google's Gmail between two German residents would probably be routed through one of the company's three data centers in Finland, Belgium and Ireland.

The only way to change this would be for Germany to require local hosting of websites, a drastic move according to experts that has not yet been pushed by German leaders. Deutsche Telekom declined to say whether it would lobby for such an approach.

Brazil's President Dilma Rousseff, angered by reports that the U.S. spied on her and other Brazilians, is pushing legislation that would force Google, Facebook and other internet companies to store locally gathered or user-generated data inside the country.

One solution would be for European leaders to beef up a new data-privacy law, which has been in the works for almost two years. A greatly toughened version of the law was backed by the European Parliament on Monday, but it still requires agreement by member states.

France and Germany may succeed in getting member states to push ahead on

talks to complete the new data rules by 2015.

Deutsche Telekom's Kremer said the new law could help: "Of course customers need to be able to use any web services they like, anywhere in the world. But we need to make this safer."

Cyber-attack Fighter Bromium Raises \$40 Million in Financing

Bromium Inc, a firm that helps corporations fight cyber attacks, said on Wednesday it has raised \$40 million in financing in a round led by Meritech Capital Partners.

Existing investors Andreessen Horowitz, Ignition Partners, Highland Capital Partners and Intel Capital expanded their investments in the company.

Bromium has raised a total of \$75.7 million since it was founded in 2010 in Cupertino, California.

Bromium is one of dozens of startups scattered from Silicon Valley to Israel that offer businesses alternatives to traditional anti-virus software, firewalls and other old-school computer security products that have proven ineffective in fending off increasingly sophisticated cyber attacks.

Its technology protects users with micro "virtual" machines that aim to prevent equipment from getting infected if websites or email are tainted with malicious software.

Bromium, which has a research facility in Cambridge, England, counts the New York Stock Exchange and Automatic Data Processing Inc among its customers.

Facebook Works To Warn Users About Violent Content

Facebook announced Tuesday it was working on new ways to keep users from stumbling across gruesome content on its website following an outcry over the discovery of beheading videos there.

The controversy which has drawn critical comment from British Prime Minister David Cameron illustrates the difficulty of setting a universal standard across the social network used by 1 billion people. Facing sharp criticism, Facebook Inc. issued a statement clarifying that violent videos were only allowed if they were presented as news or held up as atrocities to be condemned.

"If they were being celebrated, or the actions in them encouraged, our approach would be different," the company said in a statement. "However, since some people object to graphic video of this nature, we are working to give people additional control over the content they see. This may include warning them in advance that the image they are about to see contains graphic content."

Facebook banned beheading videos in May but recently lifted the

prohibition a development flagged by the BBC on Monday. A few groups have since condemned the social network for potentially exposing users to the violent content.

Cameron, whose right-leaning government has unveiled several initiatives to censor objectionable content online, said Tuesday allowing the beheading videos back on Facebook was "irresponsible."

Facebook's administrators face constant pressure from interest groups trying to impose their own forms of censorship or fighting to lift restrictions they see as oppressive. Women's rights groups want the company to crack down on misogynistic content; others have ridiculed Facebook's ban on the depiction of female breasts. Some believers have urged the site ban what they see as blasphemous content, while others decry what they claim is Facebook's censorship of pages critical of one religion or the other.

Violent news content poses particularly thorny questions for a website that allows children as young as 13 to join. Should photos of heroic rescuers working during the Boston marathon bombings be banned because some people object to the sight of gore? While images of torture and abuse helped fuel the rage of the Arab pro-democracy demonstrators, should they have been banned for being too bloody?

One free speech group said the fact that content is hard to watch didn't mean it should be hidden.

"Films about beheadings may be deeply upsetting and offensive, but they do expose the reality of violent acts that are taking place in the world today," said Sean Gallagher of the London-based Index on Censorship. "When trying to draw a line about what should or shouldn't be allowed, it's important to look at context, not just content."

Facebook Executives Coach Brazil Politicians Before Internet Vote

As Brazil threatens to impose strict new regulations on American Internet companies, Facebook offered some of its top politicians free advice this week on how to win "friends" and maximize "likes" on their webpages.

Facebook's tips on using social media came as politicians geared up for a 2014 general election and as Congress prepared to vote on legislation that could severely restrict the way companies like Facebook, Twitter and Google operate in Brazil.

After revelations of U.S. government spying on Brazilian citizens and companies, including President Dilma Rousseff, Brazil is rushing through legislation that would oblige Internet companies to store information about their Brazilian users in the country. The lower house of Congress votes on the measure next Wednesday.

Internet companies and technology experts say the demand would be costly and technically complicated.

With 76 million Facebook users, more than any other country outside the United States and possibly India, Brazil is a key market for the San Francisco-based social network. That also makes Facebook a powerful tool for Brazilian politicians Seeking to win new supporters.

"That's such a huge voting block of citizens who are getting a lot of their news and information from places like Facebook," said Katie Harbath, Facebook's global manager for politics and government engagement.

Harbath did not discuss Brazil's move to regulate Internet usage in her coaching sessions, but she conducted them with Bruno Magrani, the company's top lobbyist in Brasilia.

Harbath spent four days in capital instructing Brazilian lawmakers and staffers in packed congressional rooms on how to maximize the "likes" on their Facebook pages. She taught President Dilma Rousseff's online team how boost her social media presence.

Before joining Facebook, Harbath was a digital strategist for the Republican National Committee and the 2008 presidential campaign of former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Some of Harbath's tips: don't post more than three times a day to avoid boring potential supporters; be as authentic and personal as possible; engage constituents in question-and-answer sessions, virtual town halls that are so popular with U.S. congressmen that they call them Facebook Fridays.

Above all, she advised, post content at the time of peak Facebook usage. Compared with the United States, where usage peaks between 9 p.m. and 10 p.m., surveys show Facebook usage is heaviest in Brazil at lunchtime.

Harbath showed Brazilian politicians how to use Facebook metadata tools to learn how many users visit their pages and at what time of the day.

In a telephone interview, she declined to comment on the impact of Brazil's proposed Internet law.

Angered by reports that the U.S. National Security Agency monitored emails, phone calls and other communications of Brazilians with secret Internet surveillance programs, Rousseff's government wants to force foreign-based Internet companies to maintain data centers inside Brazil, subject to Brazilian privacy laws.

Internet companies operating in Brazil are currently free to put data centers wherever they like. Facebook Inc, for example, stores its global data in the United States and a new complex in Sweden.

Business lobbies have written to lawmakers warning that the in-country data storage requirements could exclude Brazilian Internet users from cloud data storage services, shut off Brazil from the seamless flow of global information and hinder its hopes of becoming a regional IT and data center hub.

One lawmaker who met with Harbath, former Rio de Janeiro Governor Antony Garotinho, said the requirement for local data centers must be dropped.

"I'm against it. How are you going to store in Brazil information on Brazilians that is part of a worldwide network? It's kind of hard and I think it's unlikely to happen."

Lawsuit Against Silicon Valley Hiring Practices Gets Class Action Status

A U.S. judge accorded class action status to a lawsuit that alleges broad conspiracy among major Silicon Valley companies to suppress employee compensation by not poaching each other's employees, a court filing showed.

By winning the class certification, the plaintiffs would have more leverage to extract larger financial settlements than if they were to sue individually.

In 2011, five software engineers sued Adobe Systems Inc, Intel Corp, Apple Inc and Google Inc among others over their hiring practices, alleging that the Silicon Valley companies entered into an "overarching conspiracy" to suppress employee compensation to artificially low levels.

The defendants were accused of violating the Sherman Act and Clayton Act antitrust laws by conspiring to eliminate competition for labor, depriving workers of job mobility and hundreds of millions of dollars in compensation.

The case has been closely watched in the Silicon Valley, and much of it has been built on email exchanges between top executives, including the late Apple Chief Executive Steve Jobs and former Google Chief Executive Eric Schmidt.

Judge Lucy Koh in San Jose, California, in a ruling made available on Thursday, also certified the proposed class of technical employees, which includes software and hardware engineers, component designers, application developers, among others.

The plaintiffs believe this proposed class includes more than 50,000 people, according to the filing.

In their original complaint, the plaintiffs sought certification of an "All Employee" class, which included every salaried employee throughout the United States who worked for the defendant companies between 2005 and 2009, estimated to be more than 100,000.

The plaintiffs limited their class action group after Judge Koh in April said they have yet to show enough in common among the proposed class members to allow them to sue together.

The case is In re: High-Tech Employee Antitrust Litigation, Case No. 11-02509, U.S. District Court, Northern District of California.

New Firefox Add-on Shows You How Your Browsing Is Being Monitored

Mozilla has developed a Firefox add-on called Lightbeam that could change the way you look at your daily Internet activity. Mozilla says that Lightbeam enables you to examine individual third parties over time and space, identify where they connect to your online activity and provides ways for you to engage with this unique view of the Web. As you browse, your activity is constantly being monitored by third parties on the websites you visit, often without any signs or warnings whatsoever.

Lightbeam delivers an interactive visualization of each third-party element on the sites you visit, increasing in size with every new site you travel to. All the information is stored locally as well and can be removed instantly by uninstalling the add-on. Mozilla has been passionate about Internet tracking for quite some time and hopes to illuminate the Internet even further with Lightbeam, giving users a simple tool to keep track of the countless connections occurring through their browsers every day.

Twitter IPO Pegs Valuation at Modest \$11 Billion

Seeking to avoid a repeat of Facebook Inc's much-maligned public debut, Twitter Inc revealed more modest ambitions, saying its initial offering would raise up to \$1.6 billion and value the company at up to about \$11 billion.

The valuation was more conservative than the \$15 billion some analysts had expected for the social media phenomenon, potentially attracting investors who might consider the money-losing company's listing price a better deal, with room to rise.

Twitter had signaled for weeks it would price its IPO modestly to avoid the sort of stock plummet that spoiled Facebook's coming-out party. It said on Thursday it intends to sell 70 million shares between \$17 and \$20 apiece, raking in up to \$1.4 billion for the company.

If underwriters choose to sell an additional allotment of 10.5 million shares, the offer could raise as much as \$1.6 billion.

Twitter's offering will be the most high-profile Internet IPO since Facebook's May 2012 debut, when the social network giant's shares fell below their offering price and did not recover until a year later. Still, the modest pricing doesn't obscure questions about Twitter's profitability.

"The fact that the valuation is lower than expectations, I think was smart by the underwriters. I think it will help the pop," said Michael Yoshikami of Destinations Wealth Management.

"But in the end, even for \$11 billion, the question is can they come up with earnings to substantiate that number? And it's unclear that they're going to be able to do that."

At a roughly \$11 billion valuation, Twitter would be worth more than Yelp Inc and AOL Inc combined, but only a fraction of tech giants like Google Inc and Apple Inc, worth \$342 billion and \$483 billion respectively. Facebook's market value is now \$128 billion.

Twitter and its underwriters begin a two-week road show to woo investors next Monday in New York, with stops in Boston and the mid-Atlantic region before touching down in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Denver, according to a source familiar with the offering.

"They're trying to price this for a very strong IPO, ideally creating the conditions for a solid after-market," said Pivotal Research Group's Brian Wieser, who valued the company at \$19 billion.

The company could choose to raise the price of the offering during that period as it gauges interest. Twitter is expected to set a final price on November 6, according to a document reviewed by Reuters, suggesting that the stock could begin trading as early as November 7.

Sam Hamadeh of PrivCo, a private company research firm, said Twitter could raise the price range and also the amount of shares being sold. But, he added: "Raising both the price and the size was Facebook's fatal mistake."

Twitter's debut will cap seven years of explosive growth for an online messaging service that counts heads of state and major celebrities among its 230 million active users - but still operates at a loss.

Twitter will sell roughly 13 percent of the company in the IPO and will have 544,696,816 shares outstanding after the offering. That figure could rise given the exercising of options, restricted stock units and the issuance of shares for compensation after the IPO.

The company plans to list its stock under the "TWTR" symbol on the New York Stock Exchange.

Among the biggest Twitter shareholders selling in the offering is Rizvi Traverse, a fund managed by secretive Connecticut-based investor Suhail Rizvi, who has quietly amassed a 17.9 percent stake in Twitter with the help of Silicon Valley investor Chris Sacca.

Rizvi's stake will fall to 15.6 percent of total shares outstanding after the sale. JP Morgan Chase, which obtained Twitter shares through Rizvi and Sacca, will see its stake fall to 9 percent from 10.3 percent.

Twitter co-founder Evan Williams, the largest individual shareholder, will reduce his stake to 10.4 percent from 12 percent, while Chief Executive Dick Costolo will emerge with a 1.4 percent stake, compared with 1.6 percent currently.

Co-founder Jack Dorsey will also sell shares, as will early venture capital investors Spark Capital, Union Square Ventures and Benchmark Capital.

Because many early shareholders, including Williams, previously sold parts of their stake to other investors like Rizvi, Twitter's relatively fractured ownership structure looks markedly different from the likes of Facebook and other tech companies dominated by their founders.

When Facebook went public last year, founder and chief executive Mark Zuckerberg kept 57 percent of the company's voting shares, thanks to a scheme that gave him twice the voting power of ordinary shareholders.

Following Twitter's IPO, Costolo will be under pressure to improve its money-making ability. The eight-year-old company more than doubled its third-quarter revenue to \$168.6 million, but net losses widened to \$64.6 million in the September quarter, it disclosed in a filing earlier this month.

This month, Twitter secured a \$1 billion credit line from its underwriters including Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, JP Morgan, Bank of America Merrill Lynch and Deutsche Bank.

In recent months the company has aggressively introduced a number of new advertising products, including packages with broadcasters CBS and ESPN

that show ads on TV and Twitter simultaneously for the fall TV season.

Twitter has also sought to deepen its relationships with news organizations, which provide much of the content shared on the network. The company said Thursday that it hired NBC News digital executive Vivian Schiller as the head of news.

Free! Why Apple's New OS X Mavericks, iLife, iWork Pricing Is A Big Deal

"YOU GET MAVERICKS! AND YOU GET MAVERICKS! EVERYBODY GETS MAVERICKS!"

Craig Federighi, Apple's VP of software engineering, may not have actually said that, but he channeled Oprah Winfrey in spirit by giving away some of his favorite things. OS X Mavericks, the newest operating system from Apple, was released yesterday with no price tag attached. "We are going to revolutionize pricing," said Federighi at yesterday's event. "Today, we are announcing a new era for the Macs."

It's not just a new era for Macs, but for computers overall. Microsoft may have released the Windows 8.1 upgrade as a free download (albeit one with some technical issues), but brand new operating systems have always cost money. Ben Bajarin, a tech analyst for Creative Strategies, said that Microsoft may have to change the way it does things.

"Apple has forced them to do annual releases of Windows based on how Apple releases operating systems," he told ABC News. "I don't think Microsoft is in a position to offer Windows upgrades for free, but they need to get much more competitive and lower prices. Even the last four versions of OS X have been \$29."

In addition to the new operating system, new versions of both the iWork and iLife software packages are also available for Mac users free of charge, though with a slight catch. Users won't be able to download the new programs and install them, but will need to buy new Apple devices to get access to the new programs.

Bajarin acknowledges that new Apple devices are more expensive than Windows machines (the new Macbook Pro starts at \$1,299), but that price tag also factors in new software updates. "The high price is justified a little bit when a customer knows that he or she is getting software updates for free," he said. "The total cost of ownership, both hardware and software, is now something worth thinking about."

But while the typical home user may be satisfied with iWork's word processor and spreadsheet programs, Microsoft Office may still be the go-to choice for people who use it for work. "Microsoft Office will still be there on Mac computers sold to enterprise accounts," said Bajarin. "But Apple isn't targeting someone that lives and dies by Word and Excel. For most mainstream consumers who only write a little bit or only have basic spreadsheets, iWork fits their needs perfectly well."

For people who aren't looking to buy a new device just yet, the upgraded versions of Apple's iWork applications are still available, though not for free. Pages, Numbers, and Keynote (Apple's iWork equivalents of Word, Excel, and Powerpoint) can be bought at \$9.99 each.

Despite iWork's availability on Apple devices, Microsoft is still likely

to release a version of Office for the iPad. Carolina Milanese, a Vice President of Research for the technology firm Gartner, said that Microsoft can sell Office as a complete package of software, as opposed to iWork's individual programs. "I don't think Microsoft needs to sell it for free," she said.

However, people that do purchase new devices can also extend the newer iWork apps to their old equipment. "Once you have it in the new device, you can download it for other devices you have," she said. "At that point, you own the apps and they behave like everything else in the app store."

Google Experiments With Giant Banner Ads On Top of Search Results

Google is experimenting with enormous banner advertisements for queries that are associated with brands. Digital marketing company Synrgy first spotted the test after running a search for Southwest Airlines. The search returned a large banner ad similar to a cover photo on Facebook, followed by some top links on Southwest's website. "This is a very limited test in the US; one of many we run," a Google spokesperson told The Verge.

The banners might drive more traffic to the advertiser than traditional search ads, but they also push related search results much farther down the page than we're used to seeing on Google.

Apple Co-founder Steve Wozniak Isn't Impressed: New iPad Doesn't 'Hit My Needs'

Add Steve Wozniak to the list of insta-pundits not impressed by the iPad Air.

Wozniak, an Apple co-founder, shared his thoughts recently on his old company's newest iPad, the iPad Air, saying he's disappointed there isn't a larger storage model.

"I was on a plane and missed all of the keynote. When I finally took a look at the devices, the iPads didn't hit my needs," he told an audience at App World in London this week, according to TechRadar.

Improvements to the iPad Air from its predecessor include a bump up to the faster, 64-bit A7 processor, and the introduction of a lighter, thinner casing. But those new specs weren't what Wozniak was looking for, he explained.

"Yes it's thinner, but I wanted storage. I don't have broadband at home, and you can't get great broadband connection in hotels, so I carry all my personal media in the iPad. So I was hoping Apple has a 256 GB iPad," said Wozniak. "I was hoping for more storage so I could put every episode of 'Big Bang Theory' on my iPad. So I emailed my wife and said, 'Nope, I don't want one of those.'"

Phil Schiller, Apple's senior vice president of worldwide product marketing, introduces the new iPad Air on Tuesday, So why didn't Apple come forward with a 256-GB iPad? It's likely the

company hopes most users use the iCloud for content storage and streaming, rendering all that expensive, on-board storage space unnecessary.

A better question: Why doesn't Wozniak have broadband at home?

It's because of my lousy phone company, he told the crowd. "I can't order a movie from iTunes and watch it straight away. I could wait for it, but I get bored by then.

Wozniak's diss of the company he helped found isn't exactly surprising: Steve Jobs' former partner is known for being chatty when it comes to his doubts regarding the company's activity.

In February, Wozniak told German economic news site Wirtschafts Woche that, "Currently [Apple is], in my opinion, somewhat behind, according to Apple Insider.

Others have caught up. Samsung is a great competitor. But precisely because they are currently making great products," Wozniak remarked.

And Wozniak wasn't the only one complaining about the new iPad. On Wednesday we collected the biggest complaints about the new iPad, culled from tweets by those who were dissatisfied with the presentation.

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